Basic English

And Grammatical Reform

by C. K. Ogden
Director of the Orthological Institute

Supplement to The Basic News, July, 1937

The Orthological Institute
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Contents

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For the last thirty or forty years, teachers have been putting up a great fight against the old forms of 'Grammar' — against the learning of rules based on the structure of dead languages. By protesting against book-knowledge with little or no relation to the needs and interests of present-day society, they have certainly taken a step in the right direction.

There was, however, an idea at the back of the old rules, the idea that because our thought is based on language, and because it is important for our thought to be clear, a great respect for form might be a help in the development of our minds. A good language is a machine for thought, and the delicate adjustment of words to changes of thought and shades of feeling is certainly dependent in some measure on attention to the parts and structure of the machine. But, by degrees, the machine became the manager of the man, and the cry went up for the right to be free from the dead weight of machine-made rules.

So far so good; and more power to the supporters of brighter school-books talking the language of the market place. But there is a great danger of turning out a mass of automatic talking-machines in a desire to get the 'right' reactions to the sort of questions now common in school tests. The selection and learning by heart of words and word-complexes, for no other reason than that they are the most frequent, is making the future of education very grey. Clearly, the only hope is to take up again in a new way the old idea of basing language-teaching on the structure of the machine. If the learner is made conscious of his instrument, not only will his power of thought be increased, but much memory-work will become unnecessary.

The subject of Grammar has fallen on evil days, and those whose curiosity leads them to inquire more closely than their fellows into its mysteries are liable to be regarded as a little odd. As far as the public is concerned, they are somewhat in the position of the educationist at the Zoo, who was informing her charges about the idiosyncrasies of the bulkier pachyderms. "And would you kindly tell me," she asked the keeper, "the gender of that rhinosceros." "Madam," he replied, somewhat stiffly, "that would only be of interest to other rhinosceroi."

Grammar, as usually treated, is undoubtedly a subject for other rhinosceroi; but if we avoid such subjects as gender, the genitive, and the gerund, we shall find in the study of the ways in which words serve us and mislead us a sufficiency of unsolved problems to provide research for many a generation.

Basic English is an attempt to focus on such problems. It is a language of eight hundred and fifty English words which will say clearly and simply almost everything we normally say with fifteen or twenty thousand. Since no other language can be similarly reduced and at the same time retain its character, and since English is now the natural or governmental language of more than 500 million people, it has been designed in the first instance as a medium for general international communication. Its vocabulary may also be used to operate the international nomenclatures of the sciences, or other technical terminologies; its structure is a challenge to grammarians to reconsider their categories in the light

of a Universal Grammar, which concentrates primarily on a new approach to the functions of the Indo-European verb, and above all on a new application of the theory of linguistic fictions.

Viewed from this angle, Basic is less concerned to alter the way we speak than to encourage a different attitude to what we say. For the foreigner it provides a means of communication which will be indistinguishable from Standard English; to the English-speaking peoples it offers an educational instrument by which contexts and connections can be analyzed in the interests of a fuller appreciation of the resources of the language as a whole. In other words, any improvements in grammatical usage to which it may give rise will be indirect; but from the standpoint of grammar as a science — if the reader will kindly put himself for a while in the position of those other rhinosceroi — it has certain suggestions to make which involve far-reaching changes.

For purposes of reforming, developing, or improving a language, the sort of grammatical theory on which language education has hitherto been based is about as useful as a classification of candles for the production of electric light. The usual account of nouns and adjectives, verbs and prepositions, with its trail of historical controversies, can lead only to proficiency in parsing — or at best to further Committees on Grammatical Terminology.

However tentative the terms in which the findings of such Committees are couched, the hatch must come home to roost somewhere in the educational system, if only in the Dominions; but the decision that they shall no longer find a perch in schools erected at the taxpayer's expense is one of the most gratifying achievements of Primary Education in England.

With that achievement goes a corresponding loss; for in delivering the children of the workers from an unworkable literary discipline, the Board of Education has deprived them of a potential weapon against the Word Magic which will so constantly and insidiously beset their path. The old system did at least indicate the need for circumspection. Preoccupation with the technique of 'parsing' gave us the doctrine of the particle and the enclitic; and none can be made aware of what happens when several particles or enclitics get together without realizing that the mind itself may sometimes lean on its less significant vocables to such an extent that its accent is in danger of being completely obliterated.

Those who stop short of the conclusion that all philosophy is based on an inadequate theory of language must admit that it is one to which most analysis of symbolic procedure is now tending. The old grammarians, and even their Victorian descendants, may not have taken the public into their confidence when they looked over the edge of the epistemological abyss to which the old Grammar led and from which the new Grammar has yet to emerge, but they must sometimes have smiled as they buried their heads in the sand on which metaphysics has endeavored to establish its foundations.

Any discussion of the reform of English Grammar is today faced by problems of psychology and interpretation which seem to call for a new science, wider in

scope than that covered by philology, semantics, or general linguistics as at present understood. There is, however, no reason to suppose that Orthology, as the normative science of language, is in danger of becoming an official subject in any English University. Apart from the economic lacuna, the difficulty of securing first electors, then examiners, and finally students, would be too embarrassing. Nevertheless, in so far as Basic English is the outcome of such an approach, it is worthwhile to enlarge a little on this scientific background of linguistic analysis.

If Grammar is to be more than a record of how certain relatively circumscribed and traditional groups have talked, language must be treated as part of a wider system of signs and symbols. In this wider system, Grammar becomes a branch of a more general Science of Interpretation. Such a science has to inquire into the sorts of references we make by means of our symbols and the sorts of things which it is possible to symbolize; so that, by separating the referential from the emotive elements, we may have some criterion by which we can judge how well the language we actually use is doing its job. We can then proceed to examine the structure of our symbol-systems in science or to the comparative study of other languages, in the light of Basic English, to see what possibilities they offer us of understanding our own.

The Technological Approach

Though the contribution made by Bacon in the earlier sections of the *Novum Organum* has yet to be appreciated in its linguistic setting, the first systematic formulation of a general theory of symbolic communication was made by Hobbes in the *De Corpore*. Wilkins, in his *Essay Towards a Real Character*, Leibnitz, and Horne Tooke each added his quota; but until Bentham charted the field and evolved his Theory of Fictions, nothing of a positive nature had been achieved. Today, so far as logic and psychology are concerned, the subject is much where Bentham left it. As Dr. Richards has well said it:

> "Anyone who watches logicians and psychologists with a sufficiently detached interest, will notice how often they openly rely upon sources of knowledge which do not officially belong to their subjects. 'Common, accepted usage of language' and 'What we all say and all understand perfectly clearly' are endlessly appealed to. Though they profess to be enquiring into the ultimate assumptions, they leave unexamined — but incessantly make use of — a vast body of assumptions which they share with all other users of the language they are working with. Every sentence they utter relies upon that body. Their whole activity would be vain unless these assumptions held good. This common agreed unquestioned linguistic knowledge forms the supporting medium within which they work and without which they would not be able to move a step."[1]

For the modern scientist and technologist, no less than for Bergson or the man in the street, language is first and foremost an apparatus for dealing with things in space. What is 'there' to be talked about is primarily a nexus of individual bodies; and only through metaphor do we seem to be talking about other sorts of entities. All such metaphorical and fictional jargon is capable of translation, and for technological purposes must be translated, into something less deceptive. A similar translation is equally necessary before any serious discussion; and if we define Grammar, with the late Professor Sayce, as "the mode in which words are connected in order to express a complete thought"[2] then Grammar is the science which should provide the technique for such a translation.

Actually, it was provided by Bentham — for the purpose of legal clarification and the drafting of a Code;[3] but his method of Archetypation and Phraseoplerosis

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[1] *Basic in Teaching: East and West,* 1935. p.14.

[2] *Encylopædia Britannica,* 11th Edition, 1910; Art.' Grammar.'

[3] *Bentham's Theory of Fictions* (International Library of Psychology, 1932, p. xlvii, by the writer.)

is more than most grammarians would be wise to cope with.[4] In Basic English, such translation as Bentham had in mind is part of the ordinary process of substitution by which the speaker is forced to discover equivalents. There are no invariable Basic equivalents for non-Basic words taken in isolation, and in ordinary communication no less than in passing from level to level the user of Basic is made aware of the value of what may be called 'directional' or 'operational' thinking.

Encyclopædia Britannica, 11th Edition, 1910; Art.' Grammar.'

Bentham's Theory of Fictions (International Library of Psychology, 1932, p. xlvii, by the writer.)

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[4] Professor Buchanan in his *Symbolic Distance* (1932) has demonstrated its importance for logical and mathematical analysis, and it is worth recalling that Bentham's hedonistic calculus, through the influence of Ricardo who failed to understand him on a number of important points, was responsible for the mathematical theory of economics. Nevertheless, no less a genius than Augustus de Morgan was ready, in 1839, to dismiss with a somewhat contemptuous gesture of annoyance Bentham's proposals for a less mystical presentation of elementary mathematics to the general public—such as Professor Hogben in his *Mathematics for the Million* has at last attempted.

Directional Thinking

For modern scientific analysis, as Professor Bridgman in particular has shown, what is meant by any concept is "nothing more than a set of operations."[5] To find the length of any object, we have to perform certain physical operations; and the operational interpretation of our symbols enables us to recognize and to solve a number of puzzling paradoxes which were previously concealed in the unexpressed rules of operation. In everyday language, this operational element is chiefly taken care of by the verb; but verbs are slippery concretions which elude our best endeavors to entice them from that shadowy temporal flux which is the matrix of metaphor and stenography.

What is called a verb, however, is frequently the disguise in which a variety of more fundamental symbols have been unobtrusively pooling their referential resources. Take, for example, the story by means of which the Basic learner is encouraged to study the directions in which things go when they are moved. It tells of a young man whose death was caused by the noise which got on his nerves, after an operation in a hospital. The prime mover in the story is, however, a rat — followed by a dog.

Here is the story in Basic; with only the names of the simple operations and the necessary spatial indicators or directives — to lead us from the rodent to the corpse.

"The dog went —
after the rat,
by the drain,
across the street,
over the wall,
with the fly,
through the door,
against the rules,
to the meat.

The fly got —
in the meat,
into the mouth,
down the throat,
among the muscles,

The poison got —
off the fly,

[5] P. W. Bridgman, *The Logic of Modern Physics,* 1928, p. 5.

at the digestion,
about the system.

The noise came —
from an instrument,
under the window,
up the steps,
through the hospital;
and got
on the nerves,
after the operation,
before death."

All these things are going in different directions, though no names of directions come into the word-picture if we use the verb technique:

"The dog —
'pursued' the rat,
'passed' the drain,
'crossed' the street,
and 'climbed' the wall,
'hearing' the fly;
it 'entered' the door,
'broke' the rules,
and 'approached' the meat.

The fly —
'invaded' the meat,
'penetrated' the mouth,
'descended ' the throat,
and 'infested' the muscles.

The poison —
'left' the fly,
'attacked' the digestion,
and 'permeated' the system."

But sometimes directives may be used in addition to the verbs,

“The noise —
‘emanated’ from an instrument
‘located’ under the window,
‘proceeded’ up the steps
and ‘diffused’ itself through the hospital,
where it ‘worked’ on the young man’s nerves,
‘following’ as it did, after his operation.”

In the Basic version, these 21 verbs, each telescoping an operator and a direction, were replaced by three operators (*come*, *go*, and *get*); and there are 4000 common verbs in the English language which may be similarly displaced by the sixteen operators which Basic distinguishes from them.

Current Grammar neglects this distinction altogether, and its failure to discover the underlying categories is due partly to a confusion of definition and partly to a similar failure to distinguish between two kinds of preposition.

A noun, we are generally told, is the name of a thing. What then are verbs and prepositions names of? Some grammarians hazard an unconvincing conjecture before insisting that a verb must be defined in terms of its assertive function — or whatever not. But in Universal Grammar we require a name for the small group of words which cover the fundamental operations into which direction as such does not enter; and in addition to these, the Indo-European languages, and some others, have developed an enormous number of linguistic epitomizers, the verbs proper, all characterized by the fact that in one form or another they telescope these two quite distinct grammatical categories.

Put is an operator; *in* is a directive; *put in* says what it might be expected to say, and neither constituent can be dispensed with in an ultimate analysis. *Insert*, on the other hand, is a linguistic device, or stylistic luxury, which can be dispensed with — but which it would be highly inconvenient not to call a verb. Since therefore some distinctive name is desirable for the small and indispensable group which represent less than one half of one per cent of the total, it is the operators which demand a rechristening such as Basic emphasizes with its ‘No Verb’ claim.

Problems Of Standardization

From this point of view it is an historical accident that the operator group still inflect. If *put* and *take* had developed as far as the model word *cut*, only the irregular third person singular would differentiate them from the similar roots in an analytic language like Chinese. 'I cut,' 'we cut,' 'they cut' — today and yesterday — 'I have cut,' 'the cake is cut,' 'a cut cake,' 'a cut off the cake,' and so on. But 'he cuts.' This lamentable and unmannerly hissing about a third person has been characterized by Sir Richard Paget as un-English. It would probably have disappeared long ago in the normal course of events had not printers, lexicographers, and schoolmasters rallied so egregiously to its defence; and if any reform is overdue in our accidence, here is surely an appropriate casualty.

In due course, all irregular plurals and possibly all plurals — since we have already learnt to dispense with *sheeps* — might well follow it, Basic successfully dispenses with the fast decaying subjunctive, as well as with the dubious legal advantages of *shall*; and is naturally prepared to extend its list of recommendations on request. In so far as the avoidance of unnecessary irregularity would also involve changes in orthography, our attention may appropriately be diverted at this point to certain practical suggestions in the Basic programme on the vexed subject of Spelling reform.

Spelling Reform

The movement to emancipate the children of these islands from the present tyranny of pedagogues owes much to the late Professor Skeat. In the last few years, that movement has been gathering impetus — presumably for an invasion of one of those capacious pigeon-holes in the Board of Education where a Dictator might find the solution, *sub specie aeternitatis*, of many of our most pressing problems.

As envisaged by Professor Skeat, and by most of his extant followers, *Spelling Reform* is essentially a problem waiting for a Dictator; and, strangely enough, more than one would-be Dictator has announced his readiness to oblige. The latest is Mr. James Maxton, and since his pronouncement might well have been dictated by Professor Skeat himself, it is perhaps worthwhile to consider for a moment what may be in store for us. Simplified English, he sees, is the only practical solution of the international language problem, and reformers have shown how its anomalies can be removed. But they have had too little official support: —

> "They have not been able to overcome the natural dead weight of conservative opinion which resists such changes and have had no governmental backing in their efforts, but the creation of a world order and the necessity of a world language create new circumstances where their efforts have an opportunity of meeting with success. They will be empowered to formulate the desirable changes in alphabet, spelling, pronunciation, and sentence construction, and when that has been done the changes will immediately be embodied in the official language. All official communications will be made in the new form; wireless announcements, lectures, and programmes will conform to the new style. Newspapers will be printed according to the new standards, and all printers and publishers of books, pamphlets, posters, and documents will be required to adopt it. A revised dictionary and encyclopaedia will be prepared. The advertisements and captions in the picture-houses will be similarly adjusted, and teaching in schools, colleges, and universities will be conducted entirely in the new simplified English. It will strike every English-speaking person at the beginning as something weird and not altogether agreeable, but a month is about the psychological time necessary to overcome the old habit, acquire the new, make the old method appear clumsy and antique, and to start us asking one another why we endured it for so long."[6]

It is not often that Cambridge scholarship gets rabid support in the House of Commons. Nevertheless, undue alarm would be premature. A century ago Jeremy Bentham, the founder of University College, succeeded in. carrying most

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[6] James Maxton, *If I were Dictator,* pp. 51-2.

of his reforms — except those related to education. So it is reasonable to have an alternative policy, more in keeping with academic traditions; and Basic is satisfactorily conservative in this respect.

The right method, if we may judge by precedent, is to allow our inventors to try out their discoveries on the foreigner. If after half a century, the foreigner is seen to have benefited, we can arrest the declining birth-rate and give the next generation at least a local option of reciprocating. And when any discovery is on foot in the field of language, every foreigner is equally on his toes. The reception of Basic is no exception to the rule, and the most politic question for our modernized Microcosmographia Academica is — What reforms are least unreasonable in a vocabulary so reduced?, The great majority of the Basic words present no special difficulty, and less than a hundred involve wanton violations of orthographic decency. Moreover, the whole word-list can be successfully acquired in less than fifty hours, and with so small a vocabulary the very oddity of the written form may in some cases even be an aid to memory.

When once the unsophisticated have got over the shock of Magdalene or Caius, these are the names which, like Cholmondeley or Marjoribanks, Rumpelstiltskin, Popocatepetl, and Xerxes, survive all the normal forms of nominal aphasia. Moreover, even the most optimistic spelling reformer would be forced to respect the glorious confusion of our Proper and Geographical names for many a long day, and the Basic learner will encounter ten of these, such as George or London, for every irregularity in the vocabulary itself. *West* may be reformed, but not *Mae West*, and to renovate *new* without cleaning up *New York* would be as futile as an embargo on the argot of Chicago.

Basic, then, offers us for the first time a rational incentive to reform the essentials by degrees. Its entire vocabulary has been carefully classified for this purpose in relation to the degree of deviation from good phonetic behaviour. Let the New York *Times* lead the way with ten of the worst offenders every year, selected from the Basic vocabulary. Our own Thunderer could dedicate its third leader, to the same high purpose, and print the list daily in its Agony column. If this can be achieved, the ice will have been broken, and within a decade the B.B.C., the Talkies, and the schools will be ready for a plunge.

Meanwhile foreign learners will have gone much further, and the constant receipt of business correspondence free from unliterary jargon and literary spelling will have an educative effect both on typists and on principals. The successors of Skeat and Bridges will lose no opportunity of pointing out the value of a return to forms sanctified by Shakespeare and Milton, and the discomfiture of our pedagogues will ultimately become a rout.

Orthological Syntax

Returning now to the analysis of those complex verbal forms which the verb-system has imposed on our language, we find that the fundamental operations can be arranged in a sort of hierarchy. Things *move* and are moved; there is *pushing* and *pulling* in all directions. We ourselves *put* and *take* — in all directions. When we move our bodies, we are said to *come* and *go* — and this, too, in all directions. Any particular operator is liable to have a directional tendency of its own; as *giving* is definitely associated with the direction *to*.

In Basic, moving, pushing, and pulling are covered linguistically by 'putting in motion,' and 'giving a push' or a pull. The operators therefore start with the specific actions of the human body, and neither the 10 simpler forms nor their analogues need be learnt as verbs, however the teacher or learner may regard them. For those nurtured on the Romance languages, or even on the 'empty words' of celestial isolation, they must be taught in relation to the acts or gestures to which they correspond, so that idioms only arise when an operator and a directive fail to tell their story. All the two hundred and fifty idioms required in Basic writing may similarly be presented in relation to the normal uses of the words involved, and less than 100 of them are of any importance to the learner. The difference between 'getting up a tree' and 'getting a tree up' makes it equally desirable to relate Word-order to a series of model sentences in which the operational factor is made explicit. The typical English sentence in which something is moved somewhere physically or metaphorically, with an adverbial conclusion (or a conjunctive continuation), consists, of eight words. For example: —

"I will put new theories before you now."

Here we have the pusher, the temporal auxiliary, the operator, the qualifier, the thing pushed, the direction, the person or thing on whom it is pushed, and the manner of the pushing. If each of these categories is represented by the rim of one of a series of concentric overlapping circles, we can get combinations of any selection of English words by rotating these circles or rims, so that sentences of the same grammatical form are constantly being created. It has been calculated that a Methuselah who proceeded in this manner as fast as he could enunciate the sentences, would not have exhausted the possibilities of the Basic 850 in a million years of his working life.

Such an apparatus, named the Panopticon because it enables the entire vocabulary imprisoned in this procrustean structure to be envisaged at a glance, not only simplifies the problem of word-order for the learner, but automatically produces a number of unusual. grammatical predicaments.

In this connection I would draw the attention of Grammarians to a problem which has hitherto been supposed to lie well outside their province.

When we rotate any one of the seven circles against its neighbour, words come into juxtaposition which may or may not make sense when the sentence in which they are aligned is read as a whole. Sometimes what seems meaningless on a first inspection is found to be perfectly coherent when fitted into a wider

context. It will then be a test of the learner's knowledge of the language to build up a story in which they might occur. If, on the other hand, they make nonsense,. it will be for one of two reasons.

Either the rules of word-order have been infringed, or, if the grammar is right, the behavior of the universe is not sufficiently elastic to provide a referent. Again the learner should be able to say which — from his knowledge of the language, or his experience of the world.

If now we turn to the books on Logic, we find similar problems being debated. What are we talking *about* when we discuss the existence of *round squares* and *virtuous triangles*? In the works of Meinong, *round squares* are solemnly given an ontological status in a realm of subsistence inhabited by universals and other logical entities — for whose benefit metaphysical systems have been continuously constructed since Plato built his cosmogony on the eccentricities of Greek Grammar. In the second volume of Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen* we find a distinction between the nonsensical and the contradictory, and *round squares*, though a contradiction in terms, are admitted to be above the level of nonsense.

Only an analysis of their meanings as defined in a particular context will decide whether a referent can be found for such contradictory pairs of words; and if, as Grammarians maintain, Grammar is the science which tells us how words are connected in order to express a complete thought, then all this becomes a important part of Grammar. We are concerned with substitution or translation on the one hand, and, on the other, with the semantic influence of varying contexts which decide whether a given juxtaposition of symbols is or is not legitimate.

Any pair of words which context cannot legitimize in normal prose, without some sort of punctuation, may be termed a 'gaga.'[7] A string of 'gagas' forms a Gagagram and the Art of the Gagagram will prove a powerful instrument in the hands of the Grammarian for discovering new facts about language — and may, incidentally, assist in the interpretation of much that is characteristic of modern,[8] as of Eastern, poetry. The astonishing thing about English is not so much the paucity of its gagas as their unexpectedness. In a language like Chinese they are almost non-existent, while in French they are legion. In English, you can never be certain till you have experimented; and then, as a rule, only in a given dialect, such as Standard BBC

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[7] *Brighter Basic,* p. 105.
[8] A. P. Rossiter, "Poetry as Gagagram," *Psyche,* 1935. pp. 174-187.

Word-Magic, Logic, And Grammar

A dialect, of course, is a particular form of context, and the attempt to translate or interpret words in isolation is always a sign that Word Magic is at work. One of the primary objects of studying Grammar is presumably to neutralize the effects of Word Magic, and one of the chief purposes of improving and fortifying Grammar is to arrest those further extensions of Word Magic by which civilization is today so subtly threatened. But, runs the usual answer, if what we need is clear thinking surely the remedy lies with Logic. Logic may be powerless against human perversity, but why all this fuss about language and Grammar?

For any Grammarian who takes his calling seriously, what is called Logic is only a specialized branch of Grammar which has little or no bearing on our troubles. The logician is concerned with the rules for the manipulation of words and symbols whose definitions have been agreed and whose interpretation is assumed to be unaffected by context. The Grammar of a well-constructed artificial language would be one step nearer to Logic than any of our vernaculars, but no artificial language yet proposed shows any appreciable advance on such vernaculars in handling the multifarious difficulties of multiple definition and emotive nuance which render any Logic inapplicable outside the field of mathematics and the physical sciences.

Hence the care with which Logicians eschew the practical, and the suspicion with which they view the inroads of psychology on what they have been allowed by indolent Grammarians to regard as their peculiar preserve. But since in many fields they have usurped the function of Grammarian — interpreting the vernacular without the aid of psychology and savagely harrying the ambiguous without a humane technique — they are bound to be driven off. What they have regarded as epistemological problems are all in reality conundra created by language, as Carnap and others have recently been urging against certain unregenerate custodians of the earlier logistic tradition. Had Grammarians been less concerned with the unprofitable analysis of propositions in terms of predication, which they inherited from the medieval logicians, they might have seen how important a part is played by the verb in the generation of fictions. Verb-forms such as *infect* or *cause* function grammatically like the true operators which Basic distinguishes from them. From such linguistic gadgets sprout other, fictional, accessories such as the nouns *infection* and *causation*, which in turn mimic the behavior of direct pointers like *chair* and *table*. In the same way, we find an adjective like *political* appearing to point to a quality in the same way that *sweet* or *red* point to certain physical and physiological processes which have been projected linguistically as 'qualities;' and the fictional camouflage which characterizes *of* and *for* among the so-called prepositions — the analogue having been regarded as the norm — has helped to conceal the directional constituent in the verb.

For Basic, four of the eight accepted parts of Speech — Nouns, Adjectives, Verbs, and Prepositions — are pointers, with functional and fictional analogues

which it is essential for Grammar to distinguish from their archetypes; and the other four — Pronouns, Adverbs, Conjunctions, and Interjections — are purely linguistic accessories.[9]

[9] Abbreviation is more obvious when *they* stands for "Tom, Dick, and Harry," or *here* for "at this place," than when *if* avoids the necessity for three or more explicit and co-ordinate sentences, or a complete statement is telescoped into a single exclamatory word.

Linguistic Therapy

If a linguistic accessory is taken for what it is not we get, in this connection, those forms of grammatical confusion which are evidenced by cross-classification. But if a fiction is taken for what it is not, we cannot avoid confusion by thought. Confusion of thought is commonly supposed to be the concern of the logician, and, as such, it has been officially pigeon-holed; so the psychologist, who still associates logic and metaphysics with normality, steps decorously aside. "Just as it is impossible to reason a psychotic patient out of a delusion, it is equally impossible to reason a normal person out of a prejudice."[10]

What, then, is a prejudice? It is not surprising that Socrates had to swallow hemlock in the vain attempt to persuade his contemporaries to eat their words. But the Grammar he tried to teach them was very rudimentary, and he himself was more interested in providing a fictional habitat for certain straightforward linguistic accessories about which grammarians need no longer have any delusions. A delusion is essentially an adult species of those well-defined forms of eidetic projection which people both the light and darkness of the nursery with fairies, gnomes, and demons. But even a, childish delusion may be rooted in nurse's stories, and a story is no less a verbal phenomenon than the most guileless primary proposition on which the logicians and logisticians embroider their spidery systems. Any disease may reach a stage when the patient is too far gone to respond to rational treatment; and if the origin of a delusion or a prejudice is linguistic, the psychiatrist is still without an appropriate linguistic remedy.

Take, for example, the latest approach to Willy, whose depressions "were not of an abnormal character. He was in addition not fond of company, rather inactive, and withdrawn into himself and not on good terms with his brothers and sisters. But his social adaptation was normal; he was a good scholar and there was nothing definitely wrong with him. His analysis occupied 190 sessions" — let us say, a session every other day for more than a year, during the course of which it emerged — "for instance, that his disinclination to go to the theatre or the cinema was connected with a severe inhibition of his epistemophilic instincts."[11]

Whether or not he had formulated some theory about the 'sinfulness' of 'knowledge,' there is no doubt that many otherwise normal people let their lives be guided by 'principles' which seriously "inhibit their epistemophilic instincts." They may then incarcerate themselves in monasteries and nunneries, seek release in one of the numerous sadistic satisfactions of censorship, or merely experience odd resistances in the presence of the opposite sex. But it does not require the wisdom of a serpent or a psycho-analyst to discover that 'sin' or 'knowledge', which derive their obsessive potency from Adamic contexts, may be

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[10] William A. White *Medical Psychology,* 1931, pp. 119-l20. Yet it is claimed (p. 136) that during the past quarter of a century "the field of psychiatry is no less than the problem of civilization itself."

[11] Melanie Klein, *The Psychoanalysis of Children,* 1932, p. 127.

as much a fiction as the 'epistemophilic instincts' themselves. They are verbal accessories in a description of what it is wise or right for us to see or do, and the reasons we give for saying that any act is wise or right are equally liable to be formulated in fictional language. Whether that formulation is explicit or not, it is the business of the psychotherapist to go behind it; for behind if he will find the throne of the Logos which is both Speech and Reason — the womb of silence (repression) and unreason (obsession) — coadjutant of Sex and Death. So far, the therapeutic analysis has been largely in terms of Eros and Thanatos,[12] and their ultimate significance for the Troubled Conscience. The symbols of dreams have thus been rationalized before the symbols of our everyday formulations have been considered; and so repressed is the linguistic Conscience in the field of re-education that we have allowed the Grammarian, who failed so lamentably to hold that field, to be ousted by the Popinjay.

The metaphorical language in which all psychotherapeutic diagnosis of the attempts of the infantile adult to repel the repulsive is still conducted[13] has not been conducive to clarity, either theoretically, in relation to fictions such as the Id and the Ego,[14] or practically, when eliciting the actual text of an obsessive 'idea.'[15]

So long as we aye content to analyze our social and epistemophilic obsessions chiefly in terms of psychological fictions such as 'ideas,' logical fictions such as 'propositions,' legal fictions such as 'rights,' physical fictions such as 'cause,' biological fictions such as 'sex,' saxophonic fictions such as 'swing,' phonetic fictions such as 'rhythm,' and pedagogical fictions such as 'Correct English' — all of which may work well enough, at a purely descriptive level, when nothing is being reified or inferred — we shall continue to obscure the verbal background of our problems. Every formulation, every text, actual or ostensible, is a symbolic device which, as such, is subject to translation and reduction, with or without syntactic reconstruction. Unwillingness or inability to translate is evidence of the ravages of Word Magic in any given field.

If, as the evidence sufficiently shows, Word Magic is still the most potent factor in our intellectual and emotional development, reinforced by press,

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[12] "We can speak of the first instinct if we will as the instinct of Eros and the second as the instinct of Thanatos."—Willlam A. White, *op. Cit.,* p. 121.

[13] "The super-ego, overstrict as it is, insists all the more strongly on the suppression of sexuality, seeing that the latter has assumed such repulsive forms."—Freud, *Inhibitions, Symptoms, and Anxiety,* 1936, p. 68.

[14] *Ibid,* p. 31. "To return to this problem of the ego. The apparent contradiction is due to our having taken abstractions too rigidly"—or fictions too literally? Coming nearer to reality, we have the parallel problem, which has recently assumed national proportions, of the precise relations of 'swing' and 'jazz.' Like Nat Gonella in "Bring 'em back alive," the Id may be heard "trumpeting behind the vocal."—*Radio Times,* Feb. 19, 1937, p. 26.

[15] "In most obsessive ideas (*Ibid.* p. 69) "the actual text of the aggressive instinctual impulse is altogether unknown to the ego, and it requires a good deal of analytic work to make it conscious"—190 sessions in the case of the epistemophilic fictions which Willy took so seriously that he seemed to be 'abreacting' a 'trauma.'

politics, and pulpit with all their subtle ramifications,[16] the discovery of an antidote is a first necessity. The misuse of our symbolic machinery is not the vice, or the concern, merely of a few philosophers.[17] Our primitive attitudes to language are responsible for, or an important contributory factor in, most of the diseases of civilization; and these diseases will only be successfully diagnosed when we recognize, with Bacon, the pervasive influence of linguistic refraction.

According to Bacon, "the first distemper of learning is when men study words and not matter." The chief task of reformer and scientist alike is to rid the mind of the Illusions of the Market-place, the Idola Fori in which Word Magic is so potently enshrined. The remedy, as he puts it, comes "too late to do any good when the mind is already, through the daily intercourse and conversation of life, occupied with unsound doctrines." Logic, as commonly understood, has only the effect of "fixing errors." The distempers still remain, and his panacea, in the shape of a scientific method purged of formalistic verbal traditions as set forth in the *Instauratio*, was published because "he knew not how long it might be before these things would occur to anyone else, judging especially from this — that he has found no man hitherto who has applied his mind to the like." Moreover, the mind which is applied must beware of its refractive capacity:

> "In seeking for light, if the mind were an even mirror it would reflect correct images; but being unequal, or like an enchanted glass full of superstition and imposture, it gives false reflections" — Idola.

But the refraction may equally be due to language, and it is remarkable that the apostle of induction, who laid down for the first time the principles which to-day guide all scientific research, should have seen so much more clearly than his great successors the importance of the symbolic factor in all attempts to break new ground. "We do well to think highly of Verulam," says Leibnitz, "for his hard sayings have in them a deeper meaning." That his hard sayings were intended to conceal his doctrine from all but the elect has been conclusively disproved; but that his soft sayings were not to be taken literally is perhaps not so generally recognized. Indeed, for every passage in which he walks delicately in order to avoid the perils which beset the heretic in those troublous times, there is a corresponding audacity. It must never be forgotten, he warns us, that in every age science "has had a troublesome enemy and hard to deal with; namely superstition, and the blind and immoderate zeal of religion." In fact, "those things

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[16] Radio, since it works (with what Professor Pear has characterized as "a Buchmanesque heartiness") through the Rhetoric of the spoken word on the semi-occluded external auditory meatus of an armchair electorate, is a Piper whose tunes are particularly liable to be called by some section of the rogues' gallery. And where the goal is orthological, the ear is one of the mind's least reliable approaches to its penitentiary.

[17] Mr. Duff Cooper, Minister of War, yesterday deplored that the expression 'Old School Tie' should be regarded as a laugh-raiser. He could see nothing funny in a man looking with respect on such a symbol; earnestly hoped that the spirit of the Old School Tie would continue."—*Daily Express,* Feb. 23, 1937

are to be chiefly suspected which depend in any way on religion."[18] And in whatever we do suspect; the influence of words is *omnium molestissima*.

We may contrast with this the attitude of sceptics such as Hume, who neglects the verbal factor almost entirely. Like Kant, he remains a metaphysician in his most sceptical moments, and even implies that the trouble with these verbal problems is that they are too difficult. The gates were thus still left open, since, if there are real problems differing from others only in the fact that they are abstruse, Hume's bugle is merely rallying the Berkeleys to try their hand once more — where he himself had failed. Carrying the war into the enemy's camp is in every sense a mere pious gesture, if, as Huxley remarks, the campaign is to languish for want of a good base of operations. For Huxley himself, "since physical science, in the course of the last fifty years, has brought in our inexhaustible supply of heavy artillery of a new pattern, warranted to drive solid bolts of fact through the thickest skulls, things are looking better." But another fifty years have passed, and our schools are still dominated by the verbal traditions which Bacon set himself to eradicate, as may be clearly seen from the outcry which is raised whenever an attempt is made to challenge the dogmas on which the teaching of language itself is based.

A realization of the fictional basis of human thought is so recent a development that it may almost be said to be a product of the present century, so that it is still necessary to insist on the far-reaching character of modern fictional revaluations. The comparative study of languages and systems of notation, as well as the neglected branches of psychology which border on general linguistic, are here still breaking new ground, for the range of fictions is co-extensive with human thought itself. No science deals with them specifically, but their investigation provides a nucleus for the studies to which the term Orthology has been applied.

From the social point of view then there is no escape from Fictions — in the sense that by some reform of language or the advent of some sound system of 'philosophy' they might be eliminated completely. They are inherent in the structure of all language — of the languages in which we have to interpret the notations of the sciences which endeavour to minimize their effect; they are part of the mental equipment of all those who most pride themselves on being practical; they are the root of all the religions which still dominate the greater part of mankind. What can be done, however, by those who believe in the ultimate emergence of a more rational social order is to encourage all forms of awareness both of their uses and their abuses, by the development of more adequate methods of Interpretation. In this sense the task is synonymous with that of education itself.

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[18] Yet he did not go all the way with Lucretius, if we can accept the testimony of his chaplain Dr. Rawley:—"This lord was religious . . . He repaired frequently when his health would permit him to the service of the church, to hear sermons, to the adminstration of Sacrament of the blessed body and blood of Christ; and died in the true faith, established in the church of England."

Basic In Education

In the first seven years of its existence Basic has developed from a promising experiment into a system with a world-wide reputation. It was conceived with a dual purpose — -a means of International Communication, and as an aid to the Science of Interpretation. What can it contribute to the education of English-speaking children?

Focusing merely on its practical value as an auxiliary medium, the educational authorities might allot Basic a few grudging hours in an overcrowded curriculum, or, failing this official recognition, it might be relegated to Business Colleges and Polytechnics, as a commercial subject, for one half of the population, and offered as an expensive 'extra' to the other. Such treatment, however, would neglect completely the features of Basic which make it a valuable mental discipline quite apart from the utilitarian function which is normally stressed. The feat of economy which Basic performs has set new standards of linguistic efficiency, and these should play their part in training the brains of the future.

If, as we maintain, manipulation of the minimum vocabulary gives practice in the analytic habit of mind which is essential to scientific thinking, and if the Basic words point to the concrete constituents of those fictional statements by which the sophisticated no less than the untutored mind is so frequently misled, its relevance at every phase of the educational curriculum cannot be questioned. By placing emphasis on these aspects of the system, It would be possible to use Basic as a technique for achieving control of the language-machine, and so make it an integral part of education at any stage, at the same time providing a key to international communication as a valuable by-product.

Education, for Basic, is the expansion of experience by experts. Even in the earliest stages of reading an important part may be played by the Basic framework.[19] The natural development of the material is from simple pointing, at the level of a sign-language, to the more complex needs of normal talk; and for this purpose stories about the doings of some improbable Landru from the Never-Never-Land are clearly out of place. In addition, the use of Basic is an insurance that the words most necessary to the structure will be worked in frequently enough for the learner to get them completely under control.. Most simple word lists for early reading and writing are not truly limited, but are increased, without system, at the pleasure of whoever is responsible for the teaching-material.

For those to whom it is only a first step, the expansion of Basic into normal English must be organic — just as the higher levels of Basic itself are related organically to the first concrete nucleus. Metaphorical uses are explained in terms of root uses, and idioms in terms of regular and straightforward combinations. Similarly, new words outside the Basic range will be gradually assimilated in terms of the 850, so that the full dictionary vocabulary, and

[19] See *From Pictures to Letters* (1937), by Ellen Walpole.

beyond that the technicalities of science, are referred at every stage to a familiar linguistic background.

A further advantage of concentrating on a well-defined minimum vocabulary is that it may profitably form a microcosm for intensive study. Any philological or phonetic information which increases the learner's insight into the nature of his fundamental verbal equipment will give him a more intelligent outlook on the language as a whole. Within the microcosm he will see in strong relief the grammatical articulation of the wider medium. The distinction between those parts of speech which name constituents of the universe, and the grammatical accessories which enable us to fit them into the pattern of our thought, is forced upon him by the Basic classification. The elimination of the verb, and the substitution technique which it implies, gives him a thorough grounding in the principles of linguistic condensation. Finally, in advanced education, the high definitional value of the Basic vocabulary, which enables it to cover linguistic fields systematically, makes it at the same time an instrument peculiarly fitted for the analysis of fictional symbols, emotive, legal, and scientific; and its concrete analytic impact will automatically ensure that dissociative jolt on which practitioners of Linguistic Therapy must rely.

As opposed to ordinary paraphrase, what may be called 'vertical' translation into Basic can never be the mere substitution of synonyms. Context and sense must be clearly understood, and the ordinary view of translation as a horizontal equivalent of the original, which makes schoolmasters wonder why their model pupils are less intelligent than they seem, gives way to a demand for the equivalent, at another level, of what has actually been said. The understanding of context is facilitated by the Gagagram, to which reference has already been made — asking for the completed statement, if any, in which an isolated pair of words can become significant; the relation of sense to structure is exemplified on the Panopticon-which, as we have seen, facilitates the comparison and permutation of sentences of the same analytic pattern.

It is remarkable that many individuals with poor linguistic equipment, who are confused by the intricacies of an unrestricted vocabulary, become more articulate with the aid of a systematic selection; and when the grammatical sub-structure is complete, Basic translation may take the place of the usual exercises in précis writing and paraphrase. Even the greatest artists have admitted the advantages of a 'fixed palette,' and those who gain a thorough mastery of the simple components of literary expression may be helped thereby to a better appreciation of the full range of the verbal colourist. For this reason Basic has been welcomed by discerning educationists not only as a touchstone for the appraisal of jargon in science and technical language generally, but as a valuable approach to the equally differentiated medium of literature and poetry. And just as the jaded appetite may be restored by days of salutary fasting, so those who can be induced to take for a while the linguistic vow of poverty may return to the land of plenty with a heightened sense of the values in which literature luxuriates.

To put the argument shortly (using only the 850 words with which it is concerned), Basic gives us a chance for the first time of getting free from the strange power which words have had over us from the earliest times; a chance of getting clear about the processes by which our ideas become fixed forms of behavior before we ourselves are conscious of what history and society are making us say.

The words which give us this chance may themselves become a help to thought, and Basic will be used as an instrument for talking clearly and freely. Even the very young may be trained to a sense of these new values; in fact, those with no education are frequently quicker in their reaction than persons who have been through the school-machine. That machine is badly in need of attention today, and through Basic the teacher may give, and be given, a truer view of the relation between thought and feelings on the one hand and words and things on the other. It is wise to let experience be the only judge of the value of such suggestions; but if the attempt is not made, there will be no experience on which decisions may be based. In other countries the decision is being taken for international reasons: in England and America science and common sense are working together for the development of an island language from which journeys may be taken with profit into that mist of words of whose dangers education is at last becoming conscious.

Translation And Reduction

Reverting, then, to the problem of translation it would seem that Logic, in all its phases, is condemned to an impressive[20] if depressing formalism, and the Grammarian need not at present concern himself unduly with its symbolic procedure. To one branch of Universal Grammar, however, the progress of Logical syntax may make its contribution in the not too distant future; inasmuch as it is concerned with the translatability of symbol systems and the laws of their reduction to a physical foundation, Any system of simplification such as Basic is equally concerned with the theory of translation and reduction; and two questions at once arise when we inquire what may have escaped the mesh at any particular level of complexity.

In the first place — What degree of circumlocution is necessary in vertical translation to preserve a reference at a higher level without loss? And, secondly, what difference may the loss of a particular emotive constituent of the original make to the total effect of the reconstructed symbol, whether our translation is vertical or horizontal? To vertical procedures Logical Positivism may be of interest by analogy; the emotive problem, on the other hand, is the old one which confronts every literary translator, and the standard setting is that given to it by Goethe in his tribute to Wieland: —

> "There are two guiding rules in the art of putting things from one language into another. The one is that the writer of the other language is to be made to come over to us, so that he may seem to be one of us; the other is that we are to go over to him and make the necessary adjustments to his conditions, his way of writing, his special turns of thought. All persons of education have enough knowledge of the good points of these two processes from noted examples."

The noted examples to which Goethe refers are all concerned with the complications of literary interpretation caused by the fact that so much of our everyday language is emotive rather than referential. It seems to be making statements when it is primarily recording our feelings and engendering attitudes. Basic is; in a sense, a Grammar of the Explicit; but it is an open question whether a reader with a fully annotated Basic translation would not get more from "The Song of Songs," Hafiz, or James Joyce, if he also had a record of the sound of the original, than any classical scholar today gets out of Aeschylus or Pindar in the absence of any such record of the spoken language.

In one special connection, however, the emotive factor has a very direct bearing on the possibility of any sort of improvement in our language habits. Those habits are the most deeply rooted of all forms of behavior which are affected by prejudices and other emotive incrustations; and the dogmas of correct usage are amongst the most alarming manifestations of Word Magic in education for which our examination system is so largely responsible.

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[20] Cf. Carnap, *The Logical Syntax of Language,* p. 329.

That this is no recent development is, however, obvious from the attitude even of so unorthodox a reformer as Benjamin Franklin nearly a century and a half ago.

> "During my late absence in France," he wrote to Noah Webster in 1789, "I find that several new words have been introduced into our parliamentary language. For example, I find a verb formed from the substantive notice. 'I should not have noticed this, were it not that the gentleman,' etc. Also another verb from the substantive advocate; 'The gentleman who advocates, or who has advocated that motion,' etc. Another from the substantive progress, the most awkward and abominable of the three: 'The committee having progressed, resolved to adjourn.' The word opposed, though not a new word, I find used in a new manner, as 'The gentlemen who are opposed to this measure, to which I have also myself always been opposed.' If you should happen to be of my opinion with respect to these innovations, you will use your authority in reprobating them."

The advantages of employing nouns instead of verbs for certain purposes may or may not be obvious, but reprobation is still rife and today the world is full of authoritarians who, with much less reason, are invoking Grammar in support of what they are pleased to call Correct Usage, or who insist on teaching a selection of stereotyped verbal responses regardless of the prior demands of Intelligibility. Such an insistence is frequently associated with claims to 'objectivity' based on the illusion that word-counts over a few thousand, or a few million, words will provide statistics of educational significance.

The apotheosis of statistical mare's-nesting, after a generation of word-counting, may be found in a book recently published by the University of Chicago Press under the title What Makes a Book Readable. Acknowledgment is made to the Carnegie Corporation of New York for the funds with which the study was launched, and to Dr. Michael West for "critical comments and stimulating suggestions;" while it is averred that in the field of newspaper writing, we have the American News, which prints "the news of the week in Swenson's 900" words with such so-called difficult subjects as 'preparation for war' presented in a way which reduces vocabulary difficulties to a minimum. As our readers will be aware,[21] the now defunct *American News* has been exposed as little more than a hoax, and the "critical advice" is by the author of the now notorious *New Method Dictionary*.[22]

Relying on such experts, the Chicago educationists have calculated to two places of decimals "by the regression equation for variables 1.25678" the difficulty of 350 books such as teachers delight to use. "Difficulty is expressed in terms of *the average comprehension* score that adults of limited reading ability

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[21] *Psyche,* 1934 pp. 202-222.

[22] "How not to make a Dictionary," *Psyche,* 1935, pp. 205-230

would probably make if tested on the material.” The italics are ours, and the equation in question is given on pages 134 and 138. Here it is: —

$X1 = -. 06566X_2 +$

$.001268X3 +. 004064X_4 +$

$.007545X5 -. 02342X_6 -. 03371X7 -$

$.01455X8 -. 01015X9 + 3.408 +$ or $-. 2941$

The meanings of the terms are as follows:

X_1 = the average reading score which will probably be made by a group of adults of limited reading ability on a given passage of general reading material.

X_2 = the number of different hard words found in a passage of the size used in the reading tests, i.e., about 100 words in length.

X_3 = the number of easy words found in a passage of 100 words.

X_4 = the percentage of polysyllables found in the passage.

X_5 = the number of first-, second-, and third-person pronouns occurring in the passage.

X_6 = the average sentence-length in words used in the passage.

X_7 = the percentage of different words used in the passage.

X_8 = the number of prepositional phrases found in the passage.

X_9 = the number of simple sentences used in the passage.

-.006566, +. 001268, etc., = regression coefficients which give the weight or value to be attached to each independent variable.

3.408 = a statistical constant.

.2941 = the probable error of prediction.

But, as if shocked by their own virtuosity, the authors proceed to eliminate unessentials for the severely practical purposes of those who “are accustomed to deal with statistical data;” so that the equation becomes

$X_1 = -. 01029X_2 +. 009012X_5 -. 02094X_6 -. 03313X_7 -. 01485X_8 + 3.774$,

“in which the subscripts of X designate the same elements as in the larger equation.” It is not surprising to learn that “quite as reliable results may be obtainable by combining these elements as by combining with them the three omitted from the earlier equation;” and, indeed, the shells of all the eggs sucked by the grandmother of the seven maids with their seven mops might as well be thrown in, since their omission has not been noticed. The proof that what has been omitted is unnecessary, we are told, “lies in the following measures:

$R =. 6435 +$ or $-. 085$

P.E. (est. $X_1 =. 294$.”

In order to become a ‘linguistic expert,’ it would appear, a certain type of schoolmaster has only to absent himself from these shores for a decent period, with a copy of the Pocket Oxford and a capacity for toiling in the snares of the Fowlers. So one of the chief services of Basic to Grammatical Reform may be as a corrective to all such methods of simplification as are being developed at this banal level for the text-book markets of Africa, India, and Japan. At the same time there is nothing in Basic to which any competent student of English literature need take objection. Contrary to general expectation even the elimination of verbs does not necessarily make for awkwardness or monotony.

An Example Of Verb-Elimination

Here, for example, is what Lincoln might have said had he delivered the Gettysburg Speech in Basic,

> "Seven and eighty years have gone by from the day when our fathers gave to this land a new nation — a nation which came to birth in the thought that all men are free, a nation given up to the idea that all men are equal. Now we are fighting in a great war among ourselves, testing if that nation, or any nation of such a birth and with such a history, is able long to keep united. We are together on the field of a great event in that war. We have come to give a part of that field as a last resting-place for those who went to their death so that that nation might go on living. It is in every way right and natural for us to do this. But in a wider sense we have no power to make this place an offering in their name, to give any mark of our respect, any sign of our belief. Those men, living and dead, who had no fear in the fight, have given it a name far greater than our poor power to make additions or to take away. The future will take little note of what we say here; will not long keep it in mind. But what they did here will never go from memory. It is for us, the living, to give ourselves here to the work which is not ended, which they who were in the fight have taken forward to this point so well. It is for us to give ourselves here to the great work which is still before us, so that from these dead who are in our hearts we may take an increased love of the cause for which they gave the last full measure of their love; so that, we may here come to the high decision that these dead will not have given themselves to no purpose; so that this nation, under the Father of All, may have a new birth in the hope to be free; and so that government of all, by all, and for all, may not come to an end on the earth."

The 25 pure verbs which Basic has here eliminated are as follows: —

> bring, conceive, dedicate, create, engage, can, endure, meet, live, fit, shall, consecrate, hallow, struggle, add, detract, note, remember, forget, fight, advance, remain, resolve, die, perish.

There are 30 other words for which Basic has had to find substitutes,[23] and 18 repetitions of these 55 non-Basic words[24] — necessitating, in all, more than 70 changes in a total of less than 170 different words. Yet in most American school books the illusion still lingers that the Gettysburg speech is one of the simplest pieces of prose in the English language. It is to be hoped that historical

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[23] *score, ago, forth, continent, liberty. proposition, civil, whether, battle, portion, final, life, altogether, proper, large, ground, brave, above, world, nor, rather, unfinished, thus, nobly, task, honored, devotion, vain, freedom, people.*

[24] *conceived, dedicated, dedicate, can, dedicate, can, can, consecrated, can, dedicated, rather, dedicated, devotion, shall, shall, people. people, shall.*

research may yet discover the Basic version among Lincoln's papers, and show that the 39 verbs, etc., were subsequently added by some secretary or journalist. Educationists would then have an opportunity of enlarging on the statistical significance of its Grammar.

Summary

To sum up: It has been urged that Grammar need not be the barren or trivial discipline which tradition and its enemies, the Grammarians, have made it. By approaching it through Basic English, designed as an international auxiliary medium, and as an educational technique for English and American schools, its relations to the normative Science of Orthology were exhibited; and it was maintained that through the normal process of substitution in Basic, the technique of operational and directional thinking could be acquired without tears.

The principles of Grammatical Reform were exemplified by the Basic analysis of the Verb. The bearing of this analysis on syntax, word-order, inflection, and the survival of irregularity (and so, incidentally, on spelling reform) were successively considered. In connection with syntax, the relations of Logic and Grammar were illustrated by the neglect of context in interpreting isolated symbols, or Gagas; and the confusion of operators and verbs showed the value of a linguistic Theory of Fictions for a classification of the so-called Parts of Speech.

On the educational side, the value of Basic as an impetus to, and a background for, the neglected science of Linguistic Therapy led to a discussion of the place of a nuclear vocabulary in the school curriculum. Its adoption was here advocated for six reasons-as an antidote to the prevailing Word Magic encouraged by the Echo ("correct usage") Method; as a substitute for the older forms of grammatical training; as a nucleus in terms of which the vocabulary may be extended; as a medium for the simplification of scientific knowledge; as a technique for the study of poetry and literature; and as an apparatus for the development of clarity of thought and expression.

Finally, in connection with Translation, the dogma of Correct Usage was contrasted with the prior claims of simplicity, directness, and intelligibility as attained by the Basic elimination of verbs.

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